

VZCZCXRO9035
PP RUEHAG RUEHDBU RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLN RUEHLZ RUEHROV RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHAH #0769 2140935
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 020935Z AUG 07
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9102
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 2618
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0410
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0478
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 0500
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 2188
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0937
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 0235
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0454
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0985
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0383
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0311
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 0153
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 0202
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 0124
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE 0138
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 0163
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 0476
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ2/HSE/CCJ5//
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DHO-2/REA/NMJIC-J2//
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 000769

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, EUR/CARC, EEB

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [EPET](#) [EINV](#) [FR](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN'S HYDROCARBONS: TOTAL JOINS THE RUSH

11. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

12. (U) Olivier Bouygues, Vice President of French construction firm Bouygues, Senior Bouygues Vice President Aldo Karbonaro, and Yves-Louis Darricarrere, the president for exploration and production of the French hydrocarbons company, Total, met with President Berdimuhamedov July 30.

13. (U) According to press reports, Bouygues introduced Total as a "long-standing partner" with whom it could successfully work as a team in Turkmenistan. Although the two French companies reportedly did not propose any specific projects, they said Total "would be content with any form of cooperation with Turkmenistan." Berdimuhamedov noted that Turkmenistan is always open for mutually advantageous cooperation with old and new potential partners.

14. (SBU) Embassy Ashgabat local staff watching the state television news presentation of the meeting said that Darricarrere seemed uncertain of his role in the meeting -- almost as if it were Bouygues, rather than Total, who was romancing Berdimuhamedov and who might have been seeking to reestablish the Bouygues hydrocarbons exploration branch that it closed several years ago.

15. (SBU) COMMENT: As one of the long-standing most-favored construction companies in Turkmenistan, Bouygues would seem to have a natural leg up in the rush for the supposed new Klondike. But there are other players. Shell is visiting,

and some expect a major announcement. At the same time BP has been here all week. ConocoPhillips comes next week. A/DCM and Charge met with the BP team twice and will report those meetings separately. END COMMENT.
HOAGLAND